DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 436 CE 800 011

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TITLE Striving for Excellence: Middle Schoolers Study "Work." Ideas for Action in Education and Work, Issue 5.
INSTITUTION Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, Oreg.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Sep 82
CONTRACT 400-80-0105
NOTE 18p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Education; *Career Exploration; Class Activities; Delinquency Prevention; *Experiential Learning; Interdisciplinary Approach; Junior High Schools; *Middle Schools; Program Descriptions; School Community Relationship
IDENTIFIERS PF Project

ABSTRACT

The Work as a Topic of Study program is described as a vehicle for making academic study more relevant to the middle school student's future role as a productive worker. Following an argument for maintaining a flexible middle school curriculum which contributes to the social development of students, the five school districts currently participating in the program and the criteria under which they were selected are listed. Sample activities from the Teacher's Ideabook are presented for the three levels of the program: (1) infusion of work concepts into the traditional curriculum; (2) classroom-based experiential learning including the use of community resource people, peer teaching about personal work roles, a decision-making unit, and team learning projects; and (3) community-based learning including preparation, group visits to local sites, small group projects, and shadowing (a student spends one-half day with a worker at a job of the student's choice). A fourth level involving community internships is outlined although it is not yet part of the program. Possible concerns of educational and community groups regarding the program are presented along with responses to those concerns. Three planning steps are then offered. Comments and news items from the five current sites are provided as well as names and addresses of contact persons. A bibliography of selected resources cites 5 organizations and 11 print resources. (DC)

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STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE:
MIDDLE SCHOOLERS STUDY "WORK"

Art Greenberg & Andrea Hunter

Ideas for Action in Education and Work
Issue 5 September 1982

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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Striving for Excellence: Middle Schoolers Study "Work"

by Art Greenberg and Andrea Hunter

No Longer Children, Not Yet Adults ...

Young people between 10 and 14 are truly "in the middle" as they leave childhood and head for adulthood. This transition period is quick and easy for some youth and it is slow and difficult for others. Because they differ so widely in physical maturity, intellectual development and emotional growth, their schools have a tough challenge to create a program that meets all their needs. As a result, most middle schools or junior high schools offer a curriculum that is personalized, action-oriented and flexible enough to meet diverse needs.

On top of that challenge, the competitive economic demands of the 80s are forcing parents, schools, and other agencies to play an increasingly active role in career preparation. Since more than 90 percent of American adults will work for 40 years or more, helping adolescents see the relationships between school and work is a common secondary education objective. If all youth are to leave high school either ready to work or ready for more education/training, then they should enter grades nine and ten with a general career and personal awareness that enables them to take full advantage of vocational offerings, academic courses and guidance related to each. A flexible middle school curriculum is in a prime position to prepare youth for the rich rewards of a well-planned high school experience.

The Research Says ...

"...if schools can help students make commitments to legitimate careers, delinquency should be reduced.." (Hawkins & Weis 1980).

Concerned about preparing young adolescents for a vastly different world in the year 2000, a group of researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington has combined learning theory with social development theory to create a "Social Development Model of Delinquency Prevention." The outcome is a manageable and cost-

IDEAS FOR ACTION in Education and Work

E&W Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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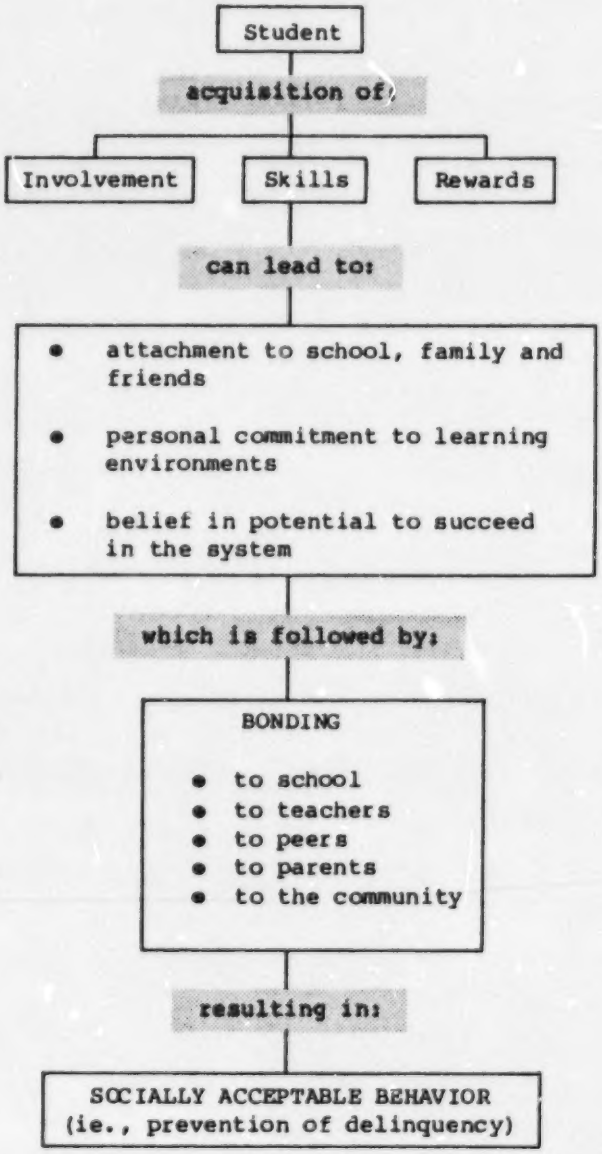
effective (i.e., at little or no extra cost) plan for creating a school climate that encourages academic excellence and personal productivity particularly for youth who are in a delinquent-prone environment.

This theory postulates that unacceptable behavior occurs most often when youth feel unattached to the people around them, have no commitment to the school or the community, and feel no belief in their own potential. The schools, therefore, are in a position to influence behavior if they can encourage growth of attachment, commitment and belief by:

- Helping youth become personally involved
- Teaching meaningful skills
- Giving appropriate rewards for successful achievement

Research indicates that this should result in positive "bonding," i.e., feeling closer to and more committed to school, peers, parents and the community. These newly developed "bonds" and attachments will then decrease the likelihood of frustration turning into potentially delinquent behavior.

Social Development Model of Delinquency Prevention



The model suggests six practical strategies that schools can use:

1. Create small units of personal interaction, such as a "school-within-a-school"
2. Manage innovations systematically and document changes to assure institutional survival

3. In planning curriculum, use each student's future role as a productive worker as a vehicle to make academic study more relevant

4. Use proven methods of successful instruction, such as student team learning (cooperative competition as part of academic motivation), interactive teaching (lesson planning techniques that result in mastery of basic skills), and pro-active classroom management (organizing a classroom to promote desirable behavior and prevent trouble before it starts).

5. Involve students in decision making for governance of their school.

6. Actively involve parents and families in educational planning and other school-related activities.

This IDEAS FOR ACTION focuses on the third strategy listed above. This approach is called WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY; it provides techniques to enrich an existing curriculum or course with activities that motivate students (1) to develop a positive attitude about their ability to succeed and (2) to think realistically about "life after high school." WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY is a concept that can be used within any academic or elective course; it does not add course work or replace what is already being taught.

The sample activities offered in the next few pages are for English, math, science and social studies classes. These activities are used to supplement and reinforce the academic and basic skills that are part of course goals. It is this integration of "textbook learning" with career awareness that will create social commitments and further a student's personal development.

Who Is Doing It? Why?

Five school districts are currently implementing WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY. Representing a cross-section of American middle schools, they are located in Waterbury, Connecticut; West Palm Beach, Florida; Bangor, Maine; Paterson, New Jersey; and Brooklyn, New York. These schools were selected using criteria listed below because they wanted to achieve the related outcomes:

- **For middle schools that feed into high schools with high drop-out rates ...**

  WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY helps students look at their future and see how "earning power" depends heavily on learning the basics and getting a diploma that demonstrates certain levels of competence.

- **For middle schools located in areas of high unemployment and/or experiencing significant technological change ...**

  WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY teaches youth to make systematic decisions based on accurate information about the current labor market.

- **For middle schools in districts that offer a variety of vocational programs ...**

  WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY helps students plan and prepare for high school courses with their own futures in mind.

- **For middle schools that experience frequent incidents of vandalism/delinquency ...**

  WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY provides personalized activities that help students develop positive bonds and commitments.

- **For middle schools that have many students with a poor self-image ...**

  WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY teaches career-related competencies and responsibilities for which youth get direct positive reinforcement from their teachers and parents.

Work As A Topic of Study: How It's Carried Out

A Teacher's Ideabook on WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY has been developed for use by the five schools listed above. It is divided into three progressive "levels" that are sequential, although not rigidly so. Each level has a defined purpose and suggested activities for teachers to use as resources.

Level I, Infusion of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY, integrates the on-going daily lesson plans with brief references to the world of work and careers. Level II, Classroom-Based Experiential Learning about Work Roles, presents classroom activities that actively teach decision-making and teaming skills in addition to providing ways for teachers to help youth learn from local community adults and from each other. Level III, Community-Based Learning about Work Roles, provides activities that teach youth the skills to use local resources to reinforce coursework and, at the same time, to serve as a basis for career planning.

The sample activities described here and the many others in the Teacher's Ideabook are certainly not all "new"; you will recognize some learning techniques that have been used successfully for many years. What is new is that WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY organizes these activities into a sequence that helps students see the relevance of school and its relationship to their future. WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY was carefully developed by choosing strategies that:

- Have been proven to be successful
- Complement current middle school goals, particularly in the area of positive discipline
- Reflect the Social Development Model of Delinquency Prevention
- Integrate academic learning with exposure to career competencies

Level I: Infusion of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY

In presenting the traditional curriculum, teachers briefly refer to how work roles relate to the subject being taught. As students begin to see connections between what they're learning and their career futures, their motivation for being in school often increases. There are many ways to "infuse." The teacher who is committed to this concept takes advantage of opportunities to refer to work roles whenever possible--in remarks to the class, references to a bulletin board

WORK AS TOPIC OF STUDY

Level I. Infusion of WORK AS TOPIC OF STUDY

Level II. Classroom-Based Experiential Learning about Work Roles

- A. Innovative use of community resource people
- B. Peer teaching about personal work roles
- C. Career decision-making unit
- D. Team learning projects

Level III. Community-Based Learning About Work Roles

- A. Preparation for community-based learning
- B. Group visits to local sites
- C. Small group learning projects in the community
- D. Half-day shadow experiences

display, a question to or from a student, a short writing assignment, a quotation written on the blackboard, a file of activities for students to do at their own pace.

Example:

In a science class, a teacher mentions how scientists such as Edison and Pasteur have not only made valuable scientific discoveries, but they also have created new industries and employment opportunities. Or, the teacher shows a news article on a local doctor who invented a machine that not only helps save lives and creates jobs but applies certain scientific principles.

Example:

In a math class, the teacher asks students to list a variety of ways that math skills are used in efficient household management.

Level II: Classroom-Based Experiential Learning About Work Roles

Getting students actively involved with adults and acquiring the skills of interaction and decision making can enrich the classroom environment as well as stimulate students to excel and consider their own futures as adults.

A. Innovative Use of Community Resource People

Local community adults can supplement a lesson or a unit by presenting related information about their jobs and careers. This is different from the typical "guest speaker" if you screen and orient the guests, prepare students and structure active learning and follow-up activities. The WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY model suggests techniques and materials for each step in the process.

Example:

In a language arts class, a local author discusses how the initial idea of a story was shaped, then describes the writing, publishing and marketing processes needed to produce and distribute the story. The students follow up by writing their own short story and researching where they might send it if they were seeking publication.

Example:

In a social studies class, veterans from World War II and Vietnam discuss their respective experiences and describe the changing roles of the military as a career.

B. Peer Sharing About Personal Work Roles

Many young people learn skills by volunteering, doing household chores, participating in youth organizations and finding part-time jobs. The intent of this activity

is for youth to realize (and be recognized for) the social and economic worth of their personal "work experiences" and to learn the communication skills necessary to share the information with their peers.

Example:

In a science class studying a unit on soil, home and professional landscaping are a topic of daily lessons. One student describes how she helps her father pull weeds, trim hedges, do the lawn and fertilize. She makes a work calendar to indicate the garden maintenance chores that must be done each month for the region in which she lives. Then she researches how many occupations use the skills of gardening such as landscape architect, gardener, nursery owner. She reports this to the class.

Example:

A social studies class studying immigration discusses the local YMCA program to help Indochinese immigrants settle in the community: find housing, seek employment, make friends, etc. Two students are meeting with some Indochinese youth who may be interested in joining the Y sports programs. In an oral presentation, they describe the challenges, rewards and frustrations of this type of work. The class lists skills the students are using as they help the Indochinese youth learn about the Y program. The students then identify occupations that use those same skills, such as interpreter, counselor, social worker, immigration officer.

C. Career Decision-Making Unit

While middle school age youth are not ready to make a decision about a career, they are ready to learn the skills of systematic decision making. WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY provides a comprehensive unit that teaches a seven-step decision-making process and helps students assess work roles and careers in relation to personal interests, values and skills. The unit has five behavioral objectives:

1. To demonstrate understanding of the importance of using a systematic decision-making process by listing at least three significant personal or career benefits from using such a process.

2. To demonstrate knowledge of the seven-step decision-making process by giving an example of how to apply each step.

3. To demonstrate understanding of the relationship between values and careers by listing at least three values or life style preferences that could influence career choice.

4. To demonstrate an awareness of career opportunities and labor market realities by listing three jobs for which demand will increase in the near future.

5. To demonstrate decision-making skills by applying the seven-step process to a selected situation.

For each objective there are suggested lesson plans with a multitude of activities and resources for each.

D. Team Learning Projects

Students divide into teams to work on experiential learning projects (or contracts) that relate career-oriented activities to the daily lessons. The project activities can be assigned by the teacher or suggested by students or community resource people; in any case, students' motivation increases when they are involved in selecting project activities that are of personal interest. Each project has potential for using local community resources, but that is optional since Level II focuses on classroom-based rather than community-based activities.

Example:

In a math class, a team of students plans, creates and distributes a guide that correlates metric and non-metric measurements. As part of the project, they research and list careers that require the skills they have used in creating and distributing the guide.

Example:

In a science class studying energy, a team of students researches practical applications of five forms of energy production: nuclear, solar, coal, hydroelectric and oil. They investigate local applications of each and culminate their project with a multi-media presentation depicting the pros and cons of each.

Level III: Community-Based Learning About Work Roles

As students begin to venture into the community to interact with and learn from local adults, they increase their communication skills as well as develop self-confidence. They also begin to understand that learning is a lifelong process and is not confined to the four walls of a classroom.

A. Preparation for Community-Based Learning

It is critical that both the teachers and the students feel "ready" to use community resources outside of the classroom. (Some students are not yet ready to venture off the school grounds; for them, community resources can be represented right in the school by functions such as maintenance, nursing, food service, etc.) WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY provides objectives for a unit to teach skills such as setting a goal for a learning experience in the community, introducing oneself to an adult and responding to unanticipated events.

Example:

Students are asked to write a paragraph describing how their first impression of someone determined the way they felt about and how they treated that person. The teacher then leads a class discussion about "first impressions"; this leads to generalizations about appropriate dress and behavior when first visiting a resource person/site.

Example:

The teacher elicits from students a list of all the things that could possibly go wrong when setting up an appointment with someone. The list might include such items as, the person isn't there yet or is in a meeting; the bus is late, so the student will be late; or the person forgot the student was coming. For each of the possible incidents on the list, the students are asked to suggest an appropriate course of action.

B. Group Visits to Local Work Sites

"Field trips" are certainly not a new activity for middle school youth. However, WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY extends the classroom with a structure that helps the students make connections between school and their own future plans. Group visits are preceded by the curriculum activities already described here, which help students think about personal values and career planning. Students are taught specific lessons in the classroom before and after a field trip so that the activity fits neatly into the curriculum and is integrated with lessons that follow.

Example:

In a language arts class studying sentence structure, the class takes a trip to a local radio or television studio. Students interview a script writer whose professional status depends on language facility. In preparation for this visit, students write a script and then ask the station writer to critique it for the class. Follow-up activities include thank you letters, reworking the class script, researching different careers in writing, etc.

Example:

In a math class reviewing basic skills and percentages, a class decides to visit a local tax consultant to discuss errors that people commonly make, the financial consequences of these errors, and ways to prevent them. In preparation for this trip the students work on their own tax forms; during the visit they ask the resource person to "evaluate" them for accuracy. After the visit, the class lists all the ways that mathematical accuracy can save money for an individual.

C. Small Group Learning Projects in the Community

Similar to the classroom-based team learning projects described above, these community-based projects add a new element; they teach the skill of interviewing. Because some youth may not be able to leave the school setting, the interviews can be by telephone as well as in person.

Example:

In a language arts class, a team of students writes a newsletter for a local retirement center. One of the project activities is to interview some of the retirees about their careers. After the students write up these career histories, they send them to the interviewees to "proofread" before inclusion in the publication. In a related activity, students identify which of the retirees' jobs no longer exist and research some of the causes.

D. Half-Day Shadow Experiences

Throughout WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY, the students have been learning skills related to decision making, working together and relating to adults. They have also been acquiring some general information about the world of work. Although they are not yet ready to make a career "choice," many youth are ready for a more in-depth and personal experience with a job or career of potential interest. In this activity, a student spends one-half day "shadowing" a worker at a job of the student's choice. All of the previous activities serve to prepare the student for this career "exploration." During the experience, students complete an Exploration Guide, a workbook of activities that structure and document what is seen and learned.

Example:

One of the students who worked on the team learning project at the Retirement Center becomes interested in returning to spend a half day with the Center program director to learn about jobs in the field of geriatrics.

Example:

The student who did the "Peer Sharing About Personal Work Roles" on gardening with her father realizes that some people get paid for doing as a career what she had previously thought of as a chore. Her exploration is set up with a landscape gardener who explains how she, too, got interested in gardening while helping her parents. The gardener explains how she attended a local community college program and then set up a business on her own.

Level IV: A Logical Extension

Although not yet a part of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY, a logical extension--a fourth level--is being used by career and vocational educators in many high schools around the country. Recently, the ideas are also being used by some middle schools and junior high schools. Level IV gives students structured experiences in using local community resources to gather accurate information and formulate preliminary career plans.

Level IV. Internships In The Community

A. Career Explorations

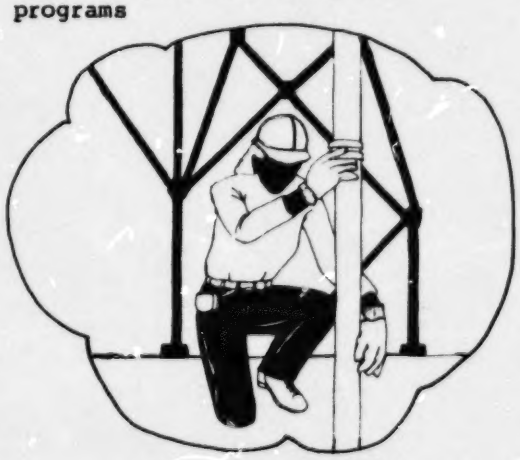
B. Job Search Skills

C. Career Learning Projects

D. Internship

These activities can provide a smooth transition from middle school to high school as well as from high school to the world of work or higher education. Due to the intellectual and social diversity of 10-14 year olds, Level IV is used most appropriately on a selective basis with the following students:

- Those who have developed a positive relationship with an adult mentor
- Those with a special new interest they could consider as a potential career opportunity
- Youth who are approaching a decision about enrolling in a high school vocational program
- Youth who are likely to leave high school early to seek full-time work
- Youth who have difficulty learning in the traditional school environment
- Youth in talented and gifted programs



Internships, the culminating activity in Level IV, can be structured in a variety of ways: community service project, actual "work experience," research project, volunteering, etc. Whatever the focus, the value of internships emerges from the student's participation in a structured activity that the student has chosen and helped to design, that is closely tied to the student's personal interests and that has social/economic worth. Extensive personal and social benefits can occur when the internship involves a community service.

How Others React to This Concept

Any single activity in WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY might not represent a departure from current practice in your school. However, a new orientation to the curriculum with simultaneous implementation of several activities might raise some legitimate concerns on the part of one or more of the constituent groups in your educational community.

It is helpful to anticipate these concerns by being prepared with reasoned responses based on experiences of the schools that are implementing WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY. In our analysis, we have identifed six major constituent groups: teachers, in-school administrators, district level administrators, students, parents and community resource people. For these groups, we list (1) some of their primary concerns and (2) some responses based on actual experiences.

Teachers and in-school administrators might be concerned about:

- Time taken from traditional course content
- Teacher readiness to meet new demands placed on them
- Time needed to develop extended classroom experiences
- Communicating school expectations to community resource people
- Evaluating students for WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY activities

Successful implementation will show that:

- With a well-planned but brief inservice session, teachers will be able to integrate new activities to enhance the existing curricula with little loss of instructional time.
- A community liaison person can effectively develop community resources and match them appropriately to student and curricular needs. (This role can have different titles, such as community coordinator, work experience coordinator, employer relations specialist, career counselor, community resource coordinator, etc.)
- Time-tested evaluation techniques (reports, quizzes, tests) are applicable to many of the activities, as are many non-paper and pencil evaluations such as demonstration projects, multi-media presentations, art projects, etc.

District level administrators, in addition to sharing the concerns voiced above, may also be concerned about:

- Liability for students participating in off-campus learning experiences
- Providing transportation for excursions outside the classroom
- Parental reaction to a new curriculum approach

Successful implementation will show that:

- Most school district insurance policies cover appropriately supervised external learning experiences
- Transportation can be provided through a combination of school buses, public transportation, parent volunteers and/or student vehicles
- Parents are reassured by consistent communication about the value of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY; positive student comments and responses also help administrators reassure parents

Students are typically concerned about:

- Missing regular school work
- How they will be graded
- Communicating with adults outside the school setting

Successful implementation will show that:

- WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY is woven into the fabric of regular instruction so that students, rather than missing regular school work, will have their regular work enriched
- Students will demonstrate their learning through traditional as well as innovative evaluation techniques
- Students can handle themselves quite well outside their classrooms after receiving proper orientation and instruction

Parents, in addition to sharing the concerns of their children and the administrators, may also be concerned about:

- The qualifications and backgrounds of community resource people who may come into contact with their children

Successful implementation will show that:

- A community liaison person carefully screens all guests visiting the classrooms and all local resource people with whom students may come in contact; this insures the quality and integrity of the experiences

Community resource people might be concerned about:

- Their lack of experience as "teachers"
- What is expected of them
- How frequently they may be called on to work with the schools and students

Successful implementation will show that:

- Appropriate orientation to school and student expectations will give most community resource people the skills and confidence to function successfully when they are asked to help students learn about their field of expertise
- Resource people will not be "used" too often if enough of them are available at the outset and if more are added as the need grows

The Cost Factor ... Little or None

Cost effective implementation is both fiscally possible and educationally sound. In many respects, WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY is a consolidation and refocusing of already existing practices and resources. It enhances a school program by integrating elements of courses such as English, math, science, career education, social studies into a cohesive and articulated curriculum. There is no need to jettison existing textbooks or develop new curriculum outlines or hire new staff. There is a need, however, to approach this curriculum orientation carefully and systematically.

Typically, school districts moving towards implementation of experiential and community-based learning need to concentrate on three planning steps:

1. All of the constituent groups mentioned above need to become aware of the value of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY; successful implementation rests on proper orientation for them. This can be achieved through many traditional means of communicating with these groups, e.g., staff meetings, PTA, service clubs, social events, letters, telephone.

2. Well planned and presented staff development sessions can help teachers and other staff realize the value of a curriculum with WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY; at the same time, they can acquire the skills to teach some of the activities that may be new to them. Because many school districts choose to re-assign staff or re-allocate some teaching responsibilities, there is rarely a need to hire a new person.

3. One successful technique used by many school districts is to designate one staff member to be a community resource coordinator. Having such a person is a tremendous boon for curriculum that involves local adults in the instructional process because most classroom teachers do not have time in their busy schedules to recruit community resource people. Having a staff person assigned to this role, therefore, makes WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY more "do-able" for the teachers, thus increasing learning opportunities for students and maximizing a smooth liaison with the community. The existence of this coordinator also makes a clear public statement about the school district's support of community-based learning, a statement that is critical for effective start-up and survival.

These planning steps, coupled with a simple and manageable record-keeping system, will go a long way toward developing a self-sustaining system for successful linkages between education and industry.

How's It Going?

Here are some comments and news items from the five sites that are currently implementing WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY.

1. North End Middle School
   Bucks Hill Road
   Waterbury School District
   Waterbury, Connecticut 06704

   Contact: Matt Larkin

   "We geared the WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY forms to our system and we've had at least 25 community resource people (CRPs) in our classes. They were very effective in over 90 percent of the presentations because of the preparation activities we did. We oriented the CRP to what the students are like and what they're studying so they could make interesting presentations and we oriented the students to what the CRP does and how it relates to what they're studying. It really helped."

   "We had a Career Day with 25 local businesses participating. As a result, one of our seventh grade learning disabled students was offered a part-time job doing undercoating work in an auto shop.

And we gave each business person a Certificate of Appreciation for spending a day with our students."

"This summer our Community Resource Coordinator is going to work with the Chamber of Commerce to identify and do job descriptions for the jobs where there will be most positions available locally. This will help make job shadowing choices realistic for our community."

2. Carver Community Middle School
301 S. W. 14th Avenue
Delray Beach, Florida 33444

Contact: May Gamble

OLYMPUS UPDATE, the parent newsletter, reports:

"Over 100 students on Kappa Team participated in a 'Job Shadowing Experiences Fair' on March 17, 1982. The Fair was the culmination of the Kappa students' visits to local businesses in the Delray community.

The Kappa students had us worried with their last minute preparations, but the collective results of their efforts were spectacular. A special pride was apparent when students explained their exhibit to other students, teachers and community sponsors. All the ingredients of a strengthened bond between the school and the community were there: the opportunity to share their personal experiences, the skills for sharing were practiced and the recognition through awards and the comments made by other students, teachers and community sponsors."

3. Fifth Street Junior High School
243 Fifth Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Contact: Tim Walton

One class recently organized a project to produce a student newspaper. In doing so, the teacher successfully integrated various elements of the Social Development Model of Delinquency Prevention: students were involved in the planning and decision making as well as the implementation, student team learning strategies were used, and learning project activities highlighted news-related careers.

As part of the newspaper project, students learned about and then actually modeled the variety of jobs that are available in the production of a newspaper. After completion of the classroom portion of the project, some of the students interviewed selected community resource people about their jobs in the media field. This creative use of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY gave students an awareness of career opportunities in the context of a team learning project.

4. East Side High School
150 Park Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey 07501

Contact: Nancy Mitchell

(This is the one location where WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY is being used with high school youth, rather than middle school.)

East Side High School feels that making daily references to work roles is helping students make sense of why they are in school. "They are not 'fighting' the teachers as much, because it's all starting to click." At a recent Math and Science Career Day, students were seeing some "daily living" reasons to take algebra or how a science class could be important for a career as an artist. "The curriculum guide helps make it easier for teachers and the kids think it's terrific."

5. Junior High School - PS #265
101 Park Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11205

Contact: Barry Hain

"We have been able to do quite a lot rather successfully. Students are saying, 'Now I know that there are things I can do that I didn't think I could do.' And it's great that the community and the school can work together because it helps give kids a real focus."

Cumberland Hospital, one of the sites students visit, is showing their positive response to WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY at a year-end assembly where they will present awards to the students with whom they have worked. The hospital is also presenting a plaque of recognition to the entire school.

Brooklyn Union Gas is providing numerous opportunities for students to learn about new uses of computer technologies. "One young woman wanted to be a secretary but is now interested in computerized word processing."

Selected Resources

Five key organizations are actively involved in designing and disseminating WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY.

1. Center for Law and Justice
   University of Washington
   JD-45
   Seattle, WA 98195

   Contact: Joe Weis
   (206) 543-1485

   The Center for Law and Justice has conducted extensive research concerning the role of schools in delinquency prevention, much of which is a foundation for WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY.

2. Middle College High School
   31-11 Thomson Avenue
   Long Island City, NY 11101

   Contact: Celia Cullen
   (212) 626-8599

   Middle College High School cooperates with La Guardia Community College by sharing both staff and facilities so that high school age youth can attend an articulated program on the community college campus. The program emphasizes experiential learning and career internships. These concepts have contributed to WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY.

3. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)
   Education and Work Program
   300 S. W. Sixth Avenue
   Portland, OR 97204

   Contact: Andrea Hunter
   1-800-547-6339 or
   (503) 248-6800 x 459

   NWREL developed Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) in 1971 based on research about integrating experiential career development with learning academic and basic skills. EBCE programs have expanded throughout the country. Their experiences during the past 11 years have contributed to the foundations of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY.

4. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
   U. S. Department of Justice
   633 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
   Washington, D.C. 20531

   Contact: Mary Santonastasso
   (202) 724-8493

   OJJDP is the federal agency that supports the development of effective ways to prevent delinquency and to promote social productivity for juveniles. WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY is one of those ways. OJJDP also provides technical assistance to schools and agencies that wish to implement such projects. They can be contacted for information on available materials.

5. Westinghouse National Issues Center
P.O. Box 866
American City Building
Columbia, MD 21044

Contact: Raul Tuset
(301) 992-0066

Westinghouse is responsible for coordinating the development of WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY and for all staff training for the schools that are implementing it.

Other helpful resources are listed below. This list is not exhaustive; it will, however, provide a beginning for those who want more research and information.

Blyth, Dale and Elizabeth Leuder Karnes. Philosophy, Policies, and Programs for Early Adolescent Education: An Annotated Bibliography. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981.

Boston YWCA. Connections: Women and Work and Skills for Good Jobs. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1980.

Coppock, Nan and Norman Hale. "Middle Schools," School Management Digest, Series 1, No. 4. Burlingame, CA: Association of California School Administrators, 1977.

Hawkins, David and Joe Weis. The Social Development Model of Delinquency Prevention. Seattle, WA: Center for Law and Justice, University of Washington, 1980.

Jones, Robert S. and Kenneth McEwin. "Creative Learning Environments in the Middle School," Childhood Education, 56 (1980): pp 146-150.

Lipsitz, Joan. Growing Up Forgotten: A Review of Research and Programs Concerning Early Adolescence-A Report to the Ford Foundation. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1977.

Lounsbury, John H. and Gordon E. Vars. A Curriculum for the Middle School Years. New York: Harper and Row, 1978.

McClure, Larry; Sue Cook; Virginia Thompson. Experience-Based Learning: How to Make the Community Your Classroom. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1977.

National Commission on Resources for Youth. New Roles for Early Adolescents. New York: NCRY, 1981.

National Commission on Resources for Youth (NCRY) is an independent, nonprofit organization to expand opportunities for young people to assume active, responsible roles in their communities--what NCRY calls youth participation. NCRY recently merged with the Institute for Responsible Education, 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215.

Principal 60, No. 3, January 1981. Issue devoted to "Surviving Adolescence: Have the Middle Schools Found the Secret?"

The Center for Early Adolescence
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
223 Carr Mill Mall
Carrboro, NC 27510

The Center began in 1978 to help adults who work with early adolescents; it provides information, consultation, resources, newsletters, monographs, training workshops and regional conferences.

Wiles, John and Joseph Bondi. The Essential Middle School. Columbus, OH: Charles Merrill, 1981.

Editor's Note

IDEAS FOR ACTION IN EDUCATION AND WORK is a new kind of service. The steady growth of interest in education/work programs has generated a wealth of new information, but the sheer mass of this knowledge has hindered practitioners and policymakers from using it to make decisions. We hope this document and the ones to follow will provide information in a usable form.

This is the fifth issue in the series. The first four are:

#1 Removing Barriers to CETA/School Collaboration (out of print)

#2 Improving Learning in the Workplace

#3 Teaching Independent Living Skills to Youth

#4 Volunteering--Pathway to Paid Employment

Back issues are available from the NWREL Education and Work Program while the supply lasts. They will also be in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) System available on microfiche through major public and educational libraries.

Ultimately, we hope this series will contribute in a small way to forging bonds among people and programs who want to solve problems related to transitions between education and work.

IDEAS FOR ACTION is meant to be a useful tool for youth workers and school personnel as well as policymakers. We want this series to be vital and adaptive. To accomplish this, we seek interaction with you--the practitioner or policymaker--that goes beyond "letters to the editor." We want to exchange ideas, to report what you are doing and to describe what you see the implications of your efforts to be. We welcome your suggestions for future issues: topics, tone, format, length--any ways that would make this series most useful for you.

Please let us know if you'd like to be part of a permanent mailing list for the series. Also let us know if you have information to share.

Address your responses to:

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UPCOMING ISSUE:
The Concept of Responsibility—What It Means to Employers, Students and School Staff

Available October 1982

Acknowledgements

The content of this IDEAS FOR ACTION reflects the work of many persons. Art Greenberg, Principal of Beach Channel High School, Rockaway Park, New York and Andrea Hunter, Youth Projects Coordinator, Education and Work Program, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, developed WORK AS A TOPIC OF STUDY under the direction of Raul Tuset at the Westinghouse National Issues Center. They were assisted in this effort by staff at the Center for Law and Justice, University of Washington, and at the Westinghouse National Issues Center, cooperating under a grant and contract from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, D.C. Reviewers included Michael Grice, Assistant Principal, Ockley Green Middle School, Portland, Oregon and Larry McClure and Marcia Douglas, NWREL. Charline Nemeth provided word processing.

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This report is produced by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, a private, nonprofit corporation. The work upon which this publication is based was performed pursuant to Contract No. 400-80-0105 of the National Institute of Education. It does not, however, necessarily reflect the views of that agency.